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ABSTRACT

A national survey was conducted to identify the nature and extent of discrimination perceived by black students and advocates in postsecondary education institutions. The black students studied were one of six studied groups, all protected by Federal law against educational discrimination. Racial discriminatory treatment was identified by these students in the areas of admissions, counseling, housing, extra-curricular activities, and faculty and administrator employment. Information was also gathered on the effects of discrimination on self perception, perception and attitudes toward educational institutions, students' educational status, and changes in educational and career goals. In addition, students identified formal and informal methods of redress utilized and rated their effectiveness. The responses of black students were compared and contrasted with the responses of the other protected groups. (APM)

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EDUCATIONAL EQUITY: RESULTS OF A NATIONAL SURVEY TO IDENTIFY THE NATURE AND EXTENT OF DISCRIMINATION PERCEIVED BY BLACK STUDENTS AND ADVOCATES IN POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTIONS

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EDUCATIONAL EQUITY: RESULTS OF A NATIONAL SURVEY TO IDENTIFY THE NATURE AND EXTENT OF DISCRIMINATION PERCEIVED BY BLACK STUDENTS AND ADVOCATES IN POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTIONS

The data reported in this paper were obtained in the context of a larger national study sponsored by the Office for Civil Rights.* The purpose of the study, conducted from October, 1979 to July, 1980, was to assess the nature and extent of discrimination perceived by protected group members receiving services from elementary, secondary, and postsecondary educational institutions. Included in the study were members of six protected groups receiving educational services--students--and advocacy group members knowledgeable about the educational services provided to protected group students at those institutions--advocates.

The six protected groups included in the study are:

- female students and advocates,
- handicapped students and advocates,
- Black students and advocates,
- Hispanic students and advocates,
- Native American students and advocates, and
- Asian American students and advocates.

These groups are protected by Federal civil rights law from specified forms of education discrimination by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the 1972 Education Amendments, and by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended in 1978.

The study was conducted in 40 educational institutions: 15 Local Education Agencies and 25 postsecondary institutions. Personal interviews were conducted with 1,144 persons: 377 students or their parents in elementary and secondary schools and 767 postsecondary students and advocates.

This paper focuses on the postsecondary component of the study and on data generated from Black students and advocates associated with the postsecondary institutions sampled for the study.

1. Conceptual Framework for the Delineation of Discrimination Issues

The first task of the study was to generate issues of discriminatory treatment in postsecondary institutions. The generation of these issues was based on the development of a classification matrix of areas of postsecondary educational services and of categories of discriminatory treatment.

To develop this classification matrix, education services including academic, support and social services typically offered in postsecondary institutions were identified. Among the postsecondary education services identified, services likely to be affected by discriminatory treatment were isolated. These service areas include:

*The study was supported by Contract No. HEW-100-79-0095.

- Admissions
- Accessibility to programs and services
- Dual systems
- Equivalency of services:

  -- Financial aid
  -- Job placement during school year and at graduation
  -- Counseling
  -- Athletics and other extra-curricular activities
  -- Access to faculty
  -- Housing
  -- Retention, discipline, and promotion
- Employment of faculty and administrators*

Discrimination in its narrowest sense is behavior prohibited by law and defined through statutes, regulations, or court rulings. A legislative analysis was therefore conducted to delineate areas of discriminatory treatment in educational institutions. Two categories of discriminatory treatment were identified: those characterized by prohibited behaviors and those characterized by mandated behaviors. Prohibited behavior were identified in the areas of:

- segregation and the variety of behaviors engaged in during efforts to desegregate;
- resegregation of protected group students within allegedly integrated educational environments;
- inequality of treatment of protected group students when compared to the treatment given to other students;
- ineffectiveness of educational services delivered to a particular protected group (this category, as a matter of legal discrimination, is largely confined to handicapped students at the postsecondary level);

Mandated behavior binding educational institutions was identified as:

- relating to provision of equality of access to education services;
- securing of equality of treatment for all students within all areas of service delivered by an institution; and
- provision of equally effective services (this category is largely confined to services to handicapped students at the postsecondary level).

The interaction between educational service areas and the categories of discriminatory treatment constituted the conceptual framework for the delineation of issues. Issues were generated through an extensive literature review of case law in education discrimination, OCR's letters

*This service area was included because of the numerous court and administrative positions which have indicated that the presence and treatment of protected group faculty have an impact on students who are members of protected groups.

of finding*, OCR annual reports and policy statements, and OCR's Survey of Headquarters and Regional Compliance Officials. Each of the issues generated contained four elements:

Issue Elements	Examples
An affected group or groups	Groups characterized by race, national origin, sex or handicapping conditions
A "covered" institution: an institution receiving Federal funds	A postsecondary educational institution
A type of discriminatory treatment	Treatment that has been labelled unequal, disparate or discriminatory by courts, Federal directives or administrative hearings
A behavior that could be redressed through legal problem solving.	A behavior prohibited or mandated by Title VI, IX, or Section 504.

The issues generated regarding discrimination in postsecondary institutions were reviewed by a panel of postsecondary educational and legal experts and refined.

Thirty-four postsecondary issues were generated. Measures to assess the nature and extent of discrimination were also developed. These measures treat each issue in terms of its:

- prevalence (an issue was regarded as prevalent if it was perceived as affecting a large number of students who are members of protected groups or as having a systemic impact on the group);
- severity of discriminatory impact (an issues was defined as having a severe discriminatory impact if it generated a high degree of anxiety or conflict or altered a major life choice such as career or educational goals);
- criticality (an issue was regarded as critical if it was perceived as both highly prevalent and severe);
- manifestation of discriminatory impact (areas of manifestation included self perceptions, perceptions and attitudes toward educational institutions, impact on student's educational status, and changes in the educational and career goals);
- methods of redress (these methods encompass formal and informal problem solving techniques utilized by protected group members such as grievance mechanisms internal to the institution, third-party intervention, self help, court suits, etc.); and
- effectiveness of method of redress in solving the problem.

* "Letters of findings" (L.O.F.) contains OCR's findings of fact, conclusions of law and proposed remedial action plans (where relevant) concerning investigations of complaints of discrimination or compliance reviews.

2. Sample Selection and Data Collection and Analysis

A two-stage sampling procedure was utilized. In the first stage a stratified sampling procedure was used for selecting 25 postsecondary institutions*. In the second stage, civil rights advocacy group members and students affiliated with the selected educational institutions were identified and selected. A sample of 25 postsecondary institutions were selected using a stratified sampling scheme. The sample was drawn from the NCES Education Directory of Colleges and Universities. The Directory listed 3,097 postsecondary institutions. These institutions were stratified by:

- Regional location. The U.S. was divided into four regions: Northeast, Midwest, South and West;**
- Institution type. Three classifications were used: four year universities, four year colleges and two year colleges; and
- Type of control: public or private institutions.

This stratification resulted in 24 cells (4 regions by 3 types of institutions by 2 types of control). Summary statistics published by NCES were used to determine the number of institutions in each of the twenty-four strata in this scheme as shown in the following table.

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* The postsecondary institutions sample size was predetermined by the Office for Civil Rights.

** Northeastern states - Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont.

Midwestern states - Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, Wisconsin.

Southern states - Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, West Virginia.

Western states - Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada. New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, (Alaska and Hawaii were excluded).

NUMBER OF POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTIONS BY STRATUM*

Region	Public Institutions			Private Institutions			
	Universities	Other Four Year Institutions	Colleges	Universities	Other Four Year Institutions	Colleges	
Northeast	12	102	144	26	405	89	788
Midwest	31	91	246	14	401	56	839
South	31	185	314	18	336	109	993
West	19	65	204	7	177	15	487
	93	443	908	65	1,319	269	3,097

A total of 25 postsecondary institutions were drawn by randomly selecting two institutions from the largest cell--the cell with the private, four-year colleges in the Northeast--and one institution from each of the remaining 23 stratification cells.

After selecting a sample of 25 postsecondary institutions, the process described above was repeated to identify an alternate sample to be used in the event that difficulties in arranging interviews with appropriate respondents precluded using an institution from the original sample.

Following the selection of the postsecondary institutions, on-campus based advocacy groups, representing the six protected groups included in the study, were identified. Mail and telephone contacts were established with those groups and their assistance in the identification and "recruitment" of potential respondents was solicited. In order to collect data from members of the various protected groups, it was decided that approximately one-quarter of the respondents in each institution will be advocates, and the remainder will be students. The sample of students in each institution included:

- At least one Native American (if possible).
- Male and female Black students.
- Male and female Hispanic students.
- Male and female Asian-American students.
- Male and female, non-minority, handicapped students.
- At least one minority handicapped student.
- Non-minority, non-handicapped female students.

* SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, Education Directory, Colleges and Universities, 1978-79, Table 2.

Data were collected in March-April, 1980 through personal interviews with 767 postsecondary respondents. Of these respondents, 174 were Black students and 53 were Black advocates. Respondents were asked to select four issue areas which in their experience were of greatest concern to them. Within each of these four areas, respondents were asked to generate up to three issues which affected them most as well as assess those issues previously identified in terms of their prevalence, severity, impact and methods of redress.

Five point scales were constructed to evaluate the prevalence of issues, their severity of discriminatory impact, and effectiveness of methods of redress used, with "1" indicating the lowest level of prevalence, severity or effectiveness (e.g. "not at all prevalent") and "5" referring to the highest level of prevalence, severity or effectiveness (e.g. "Very effective").

Mean prevalence, severity and effectiveness scores were subsequently calculated for all respondents as well as for each of the respondent groups, each issue area, and for each issue. In order to compare mean score for each of these variables, individual means were calculated along with the mean of these means (the grand mean) and the standard deviation of the distribution. The means were then converted to standard Z scores using the formula:

$$Z = \frac{\bar{x} - \bar{X}}{S_x}$$

where Z is the standard score

$\bar{x}$ is the individual mean

$\bar{X}$ is the grand mean (mean of the means)

S_x is the standard deviation

The conversion of the mean scores to a standardized score had the effect of placing all scores on a distribution with a mean of zero and a standard deviation of one, thus allowing comparisons across issues, issue areas, and respondent groups.

3. Perceptions of Discriminatory Treatment Shared by Surveyed Postsecondary Protected Groups

Regardless of protected group membership, all respondents interviewed at the postsecondary level perceived discrimination in the delivery of postsecondary services in all areas of service delivered. Most respondents distinguished among prevalent and severe issues: that is, issues viewed as prevalent differed from issues viewed as severe.

Two primary areas of concern were expressed by all protected group respondents. One area dealt with faculty and administrators in postsecondary institutions and a second area related to the special interests of protected group students. The faculty issues identified by all groups focused on:

- the underrepresentation in or absence of faculty and administrators, who are members of protected groups, from positions of authority or security, and

- the poor relationships of students who are members of protected groups with existing faculty.

These issues appeared to be united by a belief stated in a variety of forms by all protected groups that the availability of more faculty role models will increase and improve the integration of students who are protected group members into the school environment. This perception is further substantiated by a belief that the perceived lack of status of those faculty who are protected group members is a mirror image of the perceived lack of status of students who are members of protected groups.

The perception that a group is not fully integrated into the institution unless authority or status is held and displayed by members of that group, suggests a strong need for integration. This need seems inconsistent with the second category of issues relating to the lack of courses, material or extra-curricular activities that reflect the uniqueness and special interests of each of the protected groups. This is expressed in a number of ways:

- curriculum and curriculum materials are inattentive to ethnic/racial/or women's concerns (i.e. presentation of women in class materials is absent, derogatory, or stereotypical, there are no Afro-American courses, etc.); and

- equivalent support or any support in terms of quality or quantity is not provided for programs or extra-curricular activities which serve protected group students (not enough athletics for women, no support for an Hispanic Club, or no cultural events reflecting Black contribution to the arts).

These issues identified by all protected groups surveyed at the postsecondary level suggest that none of the groups feel a part of the institution nor do they feel that their unique identities are valued or supported. The dualism expressed by postsecondary respondents--i.e. the wish to be represented in the cultural mainstream as well as have the unique identity of each group supported by the institution--is also reflected in issues of discrimination perceived as highly prevalent, severe and critical by surveyed Black respondents.

4. Issues Identified by Black Postsecondary Students and Advocates

A. Issues Perceived As Prevalent

Eighty-six issues were generated by the research team and by respondents. Eleven of these issues were perceived by the majority of the Black respondents as highly prevalent as shown in the following matrix. The 11 issues focused on the areas of:

Issues Identified by Black Students and Advocates

Issue	Prevalent	Severe	Critical
Admissions			
There is a lack of concerted effort to recruit Black students. Schools' priorities in recruitment efforts are to meet quotas, not to admit a greater number of Black students. Schools do not follow through on commitments to recruit Black students.	X	X	X
Admission standards do not adequately measure the eligibility or performance of Black students.	X	X	X
Graduate and professional schools discriminate against Black students in their admission policies.	X	X	X
Counseling			
Undergraduate counselors have stereotypical attitudes toward Black students. These attitudes result in the channeling of these students into traditional fields.		X	
Housing			
Black students are too dispersed in relation to housing (i.e., lack of concentration of Black students in any one dorm, lack of an all Black student dorm, lack of special housing for minorities).	X	X	X
Extra-Curricular Activities			
Equivalent support in terms of quality or quantity is not provided for programs of extra-curricular activities which serve Black students.	X	X	X
There is a lack of extra-curricular activities that are of special interest to Black students.	X	X	X

Issue	Prevalent	Severe	Critical
Black students are discouraged from participating in extra-curricular activities. Such activities are not monitored by the school to insure equal participation.	X	X	X
Black students are not encouraged to participate in extra-curricular activities. Schools do not attempt to solicit their participation in extra-curricular activities.	X		X
Faculty/Administrator Employment			
At postsecondary schools, Black faculty are less likely to be hired, promoted or tenured than other faculty. These practices have a negative impact on the occupational choices of Black students.	X		
When Black administrators are hired at a postsecondary school, it is usually in positions of low power and security. This practice has a negative impact on Black students.	X	X	X
When Black administrators are hired at a postsecondary school, they are usually hired in a position to serve Black and other minority students. This practice has a negative impact on the student body.	X		

- extra-curricular activities (four issues);
- employment of faculty and administrators (three issues);
- admissions (three issues); and
- housing (one issue).

The dualism expressed by postsecondary respondents is evident also among Black respondents. Eight of the 11 issues perceived as highly prevalent exhibit this dualism in the areas of extra-curricular activities, faculty employment, and housing. The issues dealing with extra-curricular activities set forth two types of concerns. Black postsecondary students felt that they were either discouraged or barred from participation in extra-curricular activities, and that such exclusion was condoned by the institution. Moreover, they felt that activities of special interest to their group were not provided or supported. This is consistent with the previously noted dualism: "I am not fully accepted nor am I encouraged to have an equivalently valuable separate identity."

Issues dealing with the employment of protected group members in faculty and administrative positions identified as a common concern to all protected groups, focus on the low likelihood of Black faculty and administrators to be hired, promoted or tenured. Black faculty and administrators are most likely to be hired to serve minorities rather than to serve the entire student population. They are also likely, according to respondents' perceptions, to be hired in low-grade positions.

Of the 11 issues perceived as highly prevalent, four issues are unique to Black respondents. One of these issues which deals with Black student housing is a corollary to the concern for uniqueness expressed in the extra-curricular activities area. Housing specifically for Black students either through the assignment of Black students to specific dorms or through the provision of a segregated dorm, is a stated desire. The absence of such housing is perceived as discriminatory.

Also unique to Black respondents are issues raised in the admissions area. Black postsecondary students and advocates do not feel that a real effort is made to recruit them, they expect to meet admissions discrimination in pursuing their interests in graduate or professional schools, and they feel that admissions criteria largely rely on tests which are not adequate measures of their ability. Thus, Black postsecondary students perceive prevalent discriminatory treatment both in gaining access and in retaining their positions once they gained such access.

B. Issues Perceived As Having A Severe Discriminatory Impact

Ten issues were perceived by Black respondents as having a highly severe discriminatory impact. These issues focus on five areas:

- admissions (four issues);
- extra-curricular activities (three issues);
- counseling (one issue);
- housing (one issue); and
- faculty and administrator employment (one issue).

As shown in the issues matrix, eight of the issues perceived by Black respondents as severe were also perceived as prevalent. Issues perceived as both highly prevalent and severe are admissions, extra-curricular, housing and faculty and administrator employment concerns. The two issues perceived as severe but not prevalent concern the view that post-secondary institutions recruit Black students only to meet quotas rather than to encourage the greater participation of minority students, and that counseling services provided to Black students are inadequate.

Counseling, the only new issue area to emerge among severe issues, is perceived as based on stereotypes of the abilities and interests of Black students. Respondents felt that they are channelled into disciplines "acceptable" for Black persons rather than encouraged to explore the full range of opportunities. This issue blends with the set of issues that reflect a belief by Black respondents that they are not full members of the academic community and that their participation is concentrated in less prestigious programs and at a lower rank.

C. Issues Perceived As Critical

Seven issues were ranked by Black respondents as critical, i.e. both being highly prevalent and highly severe. Critical issues can be divided into four areas:

- admissions (three issues);
- extra-curricular activities (two issues);
- housing (one issue); and
- faculty and administrator employment (one issue).

Issues perceived as critical included:

(1) Admissions; Admission standards do not adequately measure the eligibility or performance of Black students.

- Policies of post-secondary schools are not geared towards the recruitment of Black students. Schools are not committed to recruiting Black students and their recruitment efforts are marginal.

- Graduate and professional schools discriminate against Black students in their admission policies.

(2) Housing; Black students are too dispersed in relation to campus housing, generating isolation and lack of support.

* Some students felt they were actively discouraged from participation and that schools did not attempt to monitor such activities to assure that equal opportunity to participate was the norm.

(3) Extra-Curricular Activities: Black students are not encouraged to participate in extra-curricular activities. Schools do not attempt to solicit their participation in extra-curricular activities.

- There is a lack of extra-curricular activities of special interest to Black students. Some students felt that when such activities did exist they were discouraged or not supported in the same way as other campus activities.

(4) Faculty and Administrator Employment: When Black administrators are hired at postsecondary schools, it is usually in positions of low power and security. This practice has a negative impact on Black students.

Admissions issues have emerged as an area of concern particular to Black students. None of the other protected groups surveyed expressed continuing concern for admissions problems. The fact that admissions concerns were still predominant among Black respondents may suggest that many respondents were not at institutions of their first choice, that many respondents felt that their group continues to be underrepresented in the institutions they attend and thus were expressing their belief that such underrepresentation continues to affect them directly though they have "broken the barrier" to entry. Furthermore, many respondents were concerned about their future access to graduate and professional schools.

As with issues perceived as highly prevalent and severe, the critical issues continue to reflect a pattern of dualism. However, the pattern of dualism expressed by Black respondents is broader in scope. It encompasses not only the desire for full integration simultaneously with the desire for a supported and esteemed separate identity--within institutional concerns--but also focuses on lack of equal access to those institutions.

D. Manifestations of Discriminatory Impact

Defensiveness as an element of the dualism expressed in the issues ranked as critical, is further supported by the manifestations of the discriminatory impact described by Black respondents. Five areas of discriminatory impact were identified in the study:

- Negative self perception. Such perceptions ranged from feeling inadequate as a person, having less self-confidence and lower self-esteem, to feeling powerless, disillusioned and alienated, feeling less motivated, less likely to pursue alternatives or meet resistance as well as to being more inclined to accept an unequal status and stereotypes.

- Negative perceptions of and attitudes toward educational institutions. This area of impact includes categories such as antagonism, less respect and less trust toward the institution, its faculty and administrative staff. staff.

- Negative impact on present educational status: decrease in the quality of the student's school work and inability to study, feeling inadequate as a student.

- Changes in educational goals encompassing changes in student's perceptions of his/her ability to learn certain subjects, changing or limiting one's educational goals, questioning the worth of continuing the education, and limiting the student's academic or educational growth and development.

- Changes in career choices including the changing of one's field of study, becoming doubtful about certain career choices or about ability to succeed in certain careers.

Manifestations of discriminatory impact, identified by Black respondents were both institutionally and self directed. Black students predominantly mentioned antagonism toward and mistrust of educational institutions as the primary manifestation of discriminatory impact. The second most frequently mentioned area of manifestation was negative impact on the student's present educational status, followed by a change in educational goals.

E. Methods of Redress

When respondents identified discriminatory treatment they had experienced, they were asked to indicate the method of redress utilized and rate the effectiveness of the method. The methods of redress utilized by respondents include:

Formal Methods:
- Grievance mechanisms internal to the institution;
- Filing an administrative complaint with a federal, state or municipal agency;
- Filing suit in court through a private counsel;
- Utilizing a third party mediator internal to the institution (AA Officer, 504 Coordinator);

Informal Methods:
- Dealing directly with the institution with no procedural or third party intervention;
- Asking a local advocacy group to mediate;
- Asking a local elected official to intervene;
- Community organizing;
- Self-help methods used by a group or individual;
- Increasing awareness of issue through publications, newsletters or newspapers*; and
- Going around the issue, trying to avoid it.*

* These categories were generated exclusively by respondents.

Methods of redress most frequently utilized by Black respondents were:

- grievance mechanisms internal to the institution,
- dealing directly with the institution on an informal basis, and
- self-help.

Although the majority of Black respondents attempted to actively deal and resolve issues of perceived discrimination, the methods of redress they utilized were perceived as ineffective. There was generally a poor prognosis for effective problem-solving, given the overwhelming perception of respondents that the methods they relied on generally did not work.

F. Summary

In general, unlike other protected groups surveyed, Black respondents feel that postsecondary institutions are still less accessible to them. Like other groups, they feel isolated when they do gain access and, possibly in response to that isolation, Black respondents as well as other protected groups, expressed the desire to maintain their unique identity.

The impact of perceived discrimination is primarily anger and distrust of the postsecondary institution and, to a lesser degree, poorer performance within the institution. Problem-solving, when attempted in the face of experiences perceived to be discriminatory, is focused on resolution within the institution, through the grievance mechanism or face-to-face negotiating. The tactics most often used are perceived as ineffective.